1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

286 Among the Choroti, I have only seen a very few individuals wearing
291 the poncho, and the only specimen of this garment I succeeded in obtaining belonged to a half-grown youth. This poncho (fig. 35) consists of a woollen fabric, 160 cm long and 61 cm broad, in the middle of which there is a slit, 26.5 cm in length. The weaving consists of two-threaded, tightly spun yarn of greyish white (the natural colour of the wool) and red (now faded). Its ornamental design is formed by three broad, decorated strips, woven on double warp, so that on one side the pattern shows greyish white on red ground, and on the other side red, on greyish white ground. The fabric between these strips is rep, with the woof of greyish white yarn. Whether this poncho is of Choroti weaving, one cannot be certain. Possibly it has been obtained by Choroti from their Ashluslay neighbours, seeing that similar garments are not uncommon among the latter.[1]

[531]

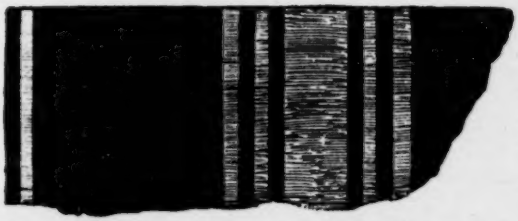

Fig. 33. Corner of man's mantle which is 204 cm long and 185 cm wide, of brownish-red wool, woven with groups of greyish-yellow stripes. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/4. Riksm. 03. 3. 1.

[531 171 422]

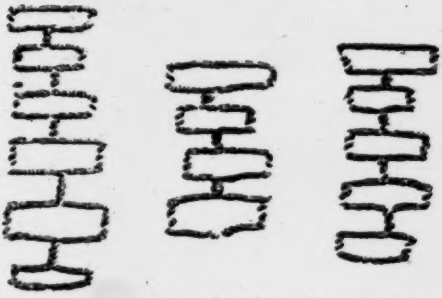

Fig. 34. Ornaments (probably property marks), placed in the middle of the mantle, a detail of which is seen in fig. 33. 1/1.

In the huts of the Choroti
292 I frequently came across a kind of thick shirts, knitted from tightly spun
714 caraguatá-fibre threads (fig. 36), but I never saw them in use. In reply to my questions as to the reason for this, I was told that these garments are chiefly worn in fighting, when they are used as a protection against
[171] arrows. Caraguatá shirts are also used by the Ashluslay and the Mataco,[2] but in the literature on those Indians I have found no reference as to their being used as a protection against arrows. The Chiriguano, however,

[1] Nordenskiöld (11), pp. 111 and 112.
[2] Nordenskiöld (11), p. 107.

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

as well as the Chaco tribes of the Guaikurú group, like the Choroti, wear these garments as war shirts.[1] In all the tribes just referred to (and the Ashluslay and Mataco as well), such shirts are worn exclusively by the men. The Caraguatá shirt here reproduced is knitted very tightly and closely (fig. 37), and, although its length is only 56 cm, exclusive of the shoulder straps, it weighs as much as 1.4 kg. The stripes that are worked in by way of ornamentation, have been formed by using string dyed black, and string dyed brown, alternately, in knitting. The parts that are between the stripes consist of undyed fibre. At the bottom edge of the shirt, small pieces of red and yellowish brown cloth have been tacked on; these originate from the whites.

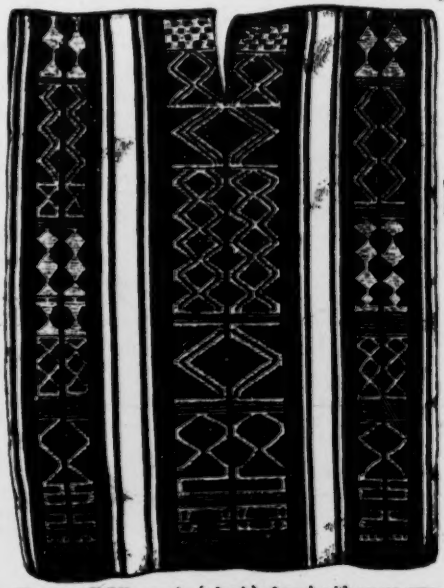

Fig. 35. Child's poncho (a boy's) of wool, with woven ornaments. Ground colour brownish-red; ornament yellowish-grey. Choroti (probably manufactured among some other tribe). Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/2. Riksm. 03. 3. 4.

These mail shirts of caraguatá-fibre string are exceedingly well manufactured, and undoubtedly form a good protection against the Chaco Indians' arrows, which are usually wooden-pointed. Arrows with rod-shaped, iron wire points, or with leaf-like, edged, iron heads, on the other hand, would probably pierce even the thickest and most closely knitted caraguatá shirt. The shoulder straps in these mail shirts are knitted considerably thinner and less closely than the rest of the shirt, and this is only natural, as the function of the straps is to suspend the shirt, and not to give protection against arrows. Besides, they could only be hit by arrows dipping at an angle from above.

[1] Krickeberg (1), p. 131.

[C should be lower case. —Analyst]

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

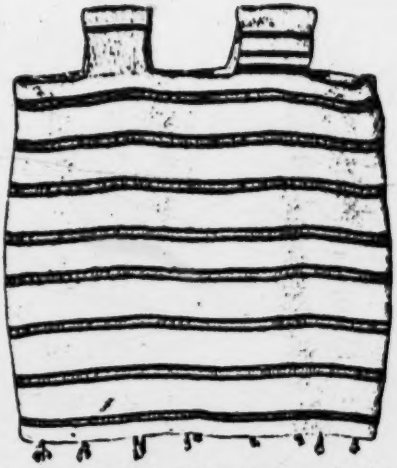

Fig. 36. Mail shirt, knitted of caraguatá string. Worn principally as a protection against arrows. Choroti, Gran Chaco, Bolivia. 1/3. Riksm. 03. 3. 382.

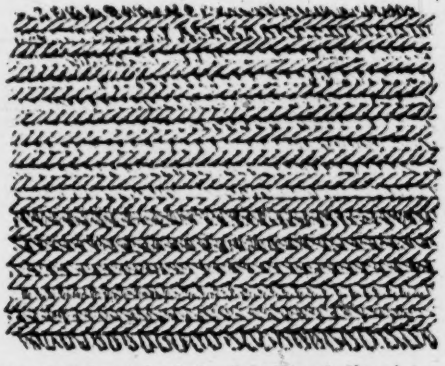

Fig. 37. Enlarged detail of mail shirt, fig. 36. Natural size.

It is worthy of note that the Choroti also manufacture another protective garment out of caraguatá, namely a sort of stockings. This footgear is put on for wading (in fishing), as a protection against the teeth of the terribly sharp-biting palometa fish.[1]

To protect the legs from spiny plants, I have seen Choroti using a kind of long deerskin leggings, laced on with leather straps. The legging here reproduced in fig. 38, which has a height of 71 cm, reached well above the knee of its wearer. Some of the Choroti make use of sandals,[2] but I have myself never seen them worn by these Indians.

The men generally wear their hair of a medium length i. e., down to the shoulders, or the shoulder blades (figs. 16—18, 39 and 83) — but I have also seen Choroti with hair so long as almost to reach the waist. The hair is usually tied round with a woollen frontlet (fig. 39), or a frontlet of palm leaves (fig. 24), or birdskin (fig. 17), but it may also be worn loosely hanging down (fig. 53). Frequently the hair is tied into a brush-like bunch at the nape of the neck (fig. 39). Woollen frontlets are generally furnished with simple, tasteful, ornamentation (figs. 39

[1] Nordenskiöld (13), p. 110.
[2] Nordenskiöld (11), pp. 113, 114.

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

and 40). Miss Agnes Branting, who has kindly examined the textiles here reproduced, found the frontlet in fig. 40 especially interesting, as similar fillets are woven by the peasantry in very many provinces of Sweden, for instance Scania, Halland, Wermland and Helsingland. Miss Branting writes on this matter as follows: »Fillets of this kind are made without any other implement than just any sort of object to which the yarn can be attached, say a weighted pincushion held on the knee. The weaving is begun from the centre of the fillet by crossing one yarn over another; for each turn a yarn is added (from a number fastened with pins) on either side. When the edge yarn has been reached, this is turned inwards, and the plaiting then proceeds from the edges towards the centre. This gives a certain firmness and compactness to the edges, and makes the middle portion slightly thinner, as may be noticed if looked at against the light.»[1]

291 302

Fig. 38. Legging, of deer-skin with yellowish-brown hair-covering remaining. Worn for protection against thorny plants. Choroti, Gran Chaco, Bolivia. 1/6. Riksm. 03. 3. 383.

Sometimes the frontlets are decorated with snail-shell spangles, sewn on, although such pieces of magnificence as the frontlet here shown in fig. 41 are very rare. From fig. 42 can be seen the way this frontlet is meant to be worn. These very decorative snail shell spangles are made from the shells of a large, white land snail (Borus oblongus, fig. 43), common in the Chaco. The Choroti do not themselves make these snail-shell spangles, but obtain them through barter from other tribes.

Narrow frontlets of woollen-yarn (see fig. 30: the 3rd and 4th men from the left) or birdskin (see figs. 17 and 30: the boy who is fifth from the left) are of very common occurrence; less frequently seen are frontlets made from palm leaves, some of which are provided with chin straps, so as not to slip easily off the head (fig. 41).

At dances and other festive occasions, the men are fond of wearing particularly handsome, broad frontlets or head ornaments of stiff or downy

292 302

[1] Compare with this a method of hand weaving described from the Choroti by Erland Nordenskiöld. Nordenskiöld (13), p. 111.

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

292 302 feathers, tied inside a woven or plaited fillet, usually no more than a centimetre wide, of coarse caraguatá, or woollen-yarn (fig. 45).

And it is also principally at dances that the men of the Choroti wear a sort of knitted skullcaps of woollen-yarn, net-like, and with a chin strap.

142 301 304 322

Fig. 39. A man with a woven frontlet of wool (greyish-white and brownish-black), and ear-lobe discs of wood. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. Photo. E. v. R.

531 These hair-nets are often studded with snail-shell spangles (fig. 46), or the chin straps decorated with down (fig. 47). With the magic character of these and other ornaments from the Chorotis, I shall deal in a later chapter.

[should be Choroti — analyst]

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

To the frontlets are affixed one or more feathers (figs. 32, 16—18, 24, 30 and others). These are obtained from many different birds, ranging from ostrich and white heron to domestic fowls. The feathers are often nicked,

Fig. 40. Frontlet, of wool, with angular ornament in brownish-black and greyish-white. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/2. Riksm. 03. 3. 9.

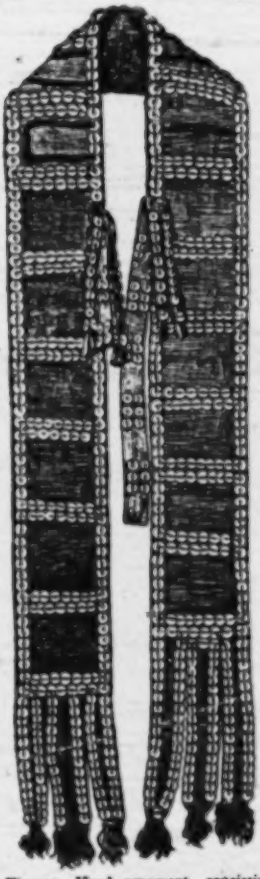

Fig. 41. Head ornament, consisting of a red, woollen, frontlet, 7 cm wide, with snail-shell spangles sewn on, and, in front, beset with turquoise-blue glass beads. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 2/3. Riksm. 10. 3. 134.

Fig. 42. A Lengua Indian with head ornament, »scalp lock» and whistle (the latter hanging round the neck on a string). From Hawtrey.[1]

Fig. 43. Borus oblongus, a white land snail, common in the Chaco. From its shell the Indians make small spangles, with which they adorn themselves. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 2/3. Riksm. 03. 3. 47.

[1] Hawtrey (1), p. 282, fig. 2.

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

237 292 302 [415] and tied with woollen-yarn on to a small stick or cane splinter (fig. 48), for sticking into the fillet of the frontlet. The Indians take very great care of their feather ornaments, and the easily damaged ostrich plumes (see front-page plate and fig. 49) are kept encased in bamboo. The plume-case reproduced in fig. 50 consists of a piece of bamboo, 50 cm long and 2.5 cm wide. At the upper joint there is a hole, 3.2 cm long and 1.2 cm wide, through which the partition wall has been removed. The bamboo chip cut out in making the hole near the bottom end, is tied over the hole with a thin strip of bast; whereas the upper hole is without such a lid. The lower hole differs from the upper, in that its edges, as well as the edges of the lid, are painted red. I presume that neither of these holes has been made exclusively for the purpose of facilitating the removal of the wall within the joints, but that they have also served to make easier the taking out of the feathers from the case. The painting red of the holes and lid edges has, as I shall show further on, probably been done with magic intent, for the safeguarding of the plumes.

Fig. 44. Frontlet of palm leaf, with chin strap. Choroti. Gran Chaco, Bolivia. 1/2. Rikm. 03. 3. 14.

[187] 292 302

Fig. 45. »State» frontlet, made of white and pink feathers and down from the pink »spoonbill. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/2. Rikm. 03. 3. 13.

The curious object seen in fig. 51 is, it has been stated, meant to be used as an ornament at dances; it is made out of the leaf of a fan palm (Copernicia australis). It seems to me,

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

however, that this object, on account of its weight and shape, would be rather unsuitable for a head ornament. At an attempt at fixing this bunch in a band tied round my forehead, the cluster overbalanced at the very first sharp movement. With some Indians (e. g., the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico) it is the custom at certain dances to hold branches in the hands,[1] and the Mataco, on occasions, dance round two men who are each holding a bunch of sugar cane, resting it on the ground. In this

Fig. 46. Hair-net, with chin strap of red, woollen yarn. The technique in the knitting work resembles what is known as macramé lace. Hair-net as well as chin strap decorated with small shell spangles. Choroti, Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/2. Riksm. 10. 3. 15.

Fig. 47. Hair-net of red woollen yarn. Knitting technique resembling that of macramé. In the chin strap, which consists of grey woollen yarn, small downy feathers are worked in. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/2. Riksm. 03. 3. 5.

latter case the dance in performed in order to hasten the ripening of the sugar cane.[2] The fan palm being of great importance in the food-getting of the Choroti, it is not inconceivable that the palm-leaf bunch here mentioned has been used at some magic dance, held with a view to obtaining an increased supply of palms. That palms are sacred trees, is a universal idea with the Indians,[3] a fact that enhances the possibility of this cluster having had some magical purpose. It may perhaps appear strange that I did not, without further ado, accept the statement of the

[1] Densmore (1), plates facing pp. 117 and 119.
[2] Karsten (1), p. 80.
[3] Karsten (4), p. 126.

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

292 302 [24] cluster being merely a head ornament, but the Chaco Indians often give information that is purposely incorrect, and hence one cannot always rely upon their explanations.[1] A quaint head ornament, met with among the Choroti, consists of a cross, about 1 dm high, constructed of feathers, thread, and a wooden stick. These crosses, worn stuck into the frontlet, are very similar to a kind of ornaments, probably symbolic or magic, that are occasionally found together with ancient Peruvian mummies.[2]

[237]

Fig. 48. Ornament of white feathers, meant for fixing in a frontlet. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/2. Riksm. 03. 3. 26.

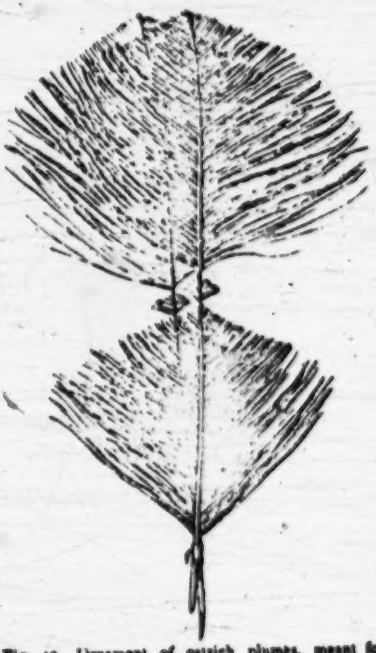

Fig. 49. Ornament of ostrich plumes, meant for fixing in a frontlet. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/2. Riksm. 03. 3. 30.

302 727 Occasionally the Choroti, and also other Chaco Indians, gather a lock of their front hair into a tuft, tying it round with yarn or narrow woollen tape, so as to make it look like a brush, or broom. Sometimes they make a similar little brush from false hair, and wear it pushed in under the frontlet, over the forehead, so that it points downwards. The false-hair brush here depicted (fig. 52) possessed special value to the Choroti

[1] As to the lying disposition of the Indians of the Chaco, see for example Nordenskiöld (18), p. 34.
[2] Nordenskiöld (11), pp. 138—140.

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

136 I have mentioned that the Choroti do not possess any water-craft, so
481 that when fishing with nets they often have to wade or swim. In doing
292 this, they expose themselves to being attacked by palometa fishes. As a protection for their legs in wading, the Indians occasionally wear a kind of mail stockings of caraguatá (see p. 54), but when they are swimming, they often get badly mauled by these fierce fishes, and I saw several Choroti with enormous scars from the bites of palometas (fig. 53). It also happens, now and again, that Indians, whem swimming, get killed by caymans, which, here and there, are plentiful.

[286 824]

Fig. 118. Mesh-spacer of palo santo (Bulnesia sarmienti). Length 14.0 cm, width 3.0 cm; thickness along longitudinal axis 0.6 cm. The thickness decreases towards the longer edges, which are rounded. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. Riksm. 03. 3. 242.

222 In the collection of the fruits, roots and pith of wild plants the Choroti possess an important source of subsistence. The Chaco Indians obtain edible fruits from, inter alia, the algaroba (Prosopis alba), the chañar (Gourlica decortitans), the mistol (Zizyphus mistol) and the tusca (Acacia aroma). The rootstocks of the caraguatá, or chahuar (Bromelia serra), plant are used for food by these Indians, and the same applies to the pith of the fan palm (Copernicia australis). For pulling down within reach the fruit-bearing branches of trees, the Indians make use of wooden hooks with a short arm and a long one, the latter then serving as a handle, whilst the tree branch which is to be bent down, is hooked with the shorter arm of the implement.[1] In digging up the spiny caraguatá plants the Choroti use a forked stick.[2]

[227]

241

Fig. 119. Fishing hook of iron, with line of caraguatá fibre. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/2. Riksm. 03. 3. 238.

Fig. 120. Fish club of palo santo (Handle upwards). Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/2. Riksm. 03. 3. 87.

At the time of my stay among the Choroti, the part of the tribe with whom I was in touch carried on no other agriculture than the growing of pumpkins in a primi-

[1] Nordenskiöld (11), fig. 3.
[2] Nordenskiöld (13), fig. 49.

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco

Choroti SK6

881 535 their rattle gourds, whilst the men provided with drums beat them. The girl in whose honour the dance was held was standing motionless and silent at the entrance of the hut reclining against the wall and had to remain so during the whole ceremony. Sometimes, when towards evening she got tired and was on the point of falling asleep, one of the medicine-men came up to her and shook his rattle close to her face as if to keep her awake. The ceremony began in the afternoon and was continued with short pauses throughout the whole evening until midnight. I was [292] informed that as long as the dance goes on the girl need not be veiled, but as soon as the conjuration is finished for the night she must have her face and her whole body well covered. During the whole period [262] that the dance is performed she is moreover obliged to fast, avoiding fish and meat and living only on some light vegetable food.

881 372 I may add that all the men who took part in the ceremony were painted on the face in one way or another. Some of them simply had the face coated red with roucou or black with charcoal, whereas others had X-shaped or other patterns painted on the cheeks. The men's faces are always painted in this way at the conjurations of the Indians, and these paintings 881 have a purely magical significance.

273 The drinking of algaroba beer also forms part of the magical practices at the feast, but it is strictly limited to the men.

881 784 155 845 The object of all these ceremonies is to protect the girl against the evil spirits, the *möhsek*, by which she is believed to be particularly attacked during her unclean condition. The spirits try to enter into her through the face — especially through those parts where there is a natural opening of the body, such as the eyes, the ears, the nose, and the mouth — and also through the ventral parts, the consequence being, if they succeed in doing so, that she will fall ill and die, or become supernaturally pregnant and give birth to a monster. It is in this way that the Indians account for the birth of those deformed children which they kill directly after birth. To prevent such frightful accidents the girl's head and body are covered after the conjuration is finished for the night. By means of the dancing, chanting, drumming, etc. the evil demons who take an interest in the girl and swarm about her are conjured and rendered harmless. According to the idea of the Indians she is not only protected for the time being against their attacks, but she will also retain a certain power of resistance against them in the future.

881 535 The puberty of a girl is not celebrated in all cases among the Choroti with so many ceremonies as in the case just described, but the